

Eye Exams among Persons with Diabetes

Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness among working age adults. An annual eye exam allows for early detection and prompt treatment of diabetic retinopathy.

Persons with diabetes are at increased risk for eye complications, but the earlier problems are diagnosed, the more successful treatments can be.

American Diabetes Association recommendations to avoid eye problems:

- Keep blood sugar levels under control.
- Get high blood pressure under control.
- If you smoke, quit.
- Get a dilated eye exam at least once every year.

In Virginia, in 2009, 67.6% of adults with diabetes received an annual eye exam.

Percent of adults with diabetes who had an eye exam within the past year, Virginia, 2009

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
62.2%	63.3%	63.0%	64.7%	66.4%	66.7%	66.3%	67.3%	67.6%

Data notes: Percents are weighted based on 2000 U.S. Census data, age-adjusted, and reported in three-year rolling averages. For example, the 2002 estimate is an average of data from 2001, 2002, and 2003. Two years of data were used when three were not available.

Healthy People 2020 Objective:

(D-10) Increase the proportion of adults with diabetes who have an annual dilated eye exam to 58.7%.

Retinopathy Prevalence among Persons with Diabetes

In 2010, 13.1% of adults with diabetes in Virginia had been told by a doctor that their diabetes had affected their eyes, or that they had retinopathy.

Healthy People 2020 Objective:

(V-5.2) Reduce visual impairment due to diabetic retinopathy to 30.7 per 1,000 (3.1%).

American Diabetes Association Recommendation: A dilated eye exam should be performed once a year.

Sources: CDC Diabetes Indicators and Data Source Internet Tool; VA Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2001-2010;

American Diabetes Association: [Eye Care](#); www.diabetes.org.